16: Gulick E-5 (1952)1954 MEl Lebanon MEl

in the genealogy, but there is no disagreement on their ultimate origin in the same man, often referred to as "our forefather." On the basis of the number of generations accounted for in the chart, it appears that the founder was probably born sometime late in the 16th century. Historical material is available which gives a clue to the reason for the founding of the village and at the same time supports the estimate of the date suggested by the genealogy. The reign of the Amir Fakhr al-Din II (1590–1635) is known to have been a period in which many Syrian Christians sought refuge in Lebanon to escape Turkish persecution. It is reasonable to suppose that the founder of al-Munsif, a Greek Orthodox Christian, was one of these. The probable date of the establishment of the village suggests, further, the reason for the selection of a site which is far from ideal for agricultural purposes: the better-favored areas in Lebanon had already been occupied by other groups.

Once established, what manner of village was al-Munsif? Everything that can be learned about "the old days" indicates that it must have been typical of the traditional pattern of village life in the Middle East, which in turn fits the criteria of the "folk community," as understood by sociologists in general.[1] Life in al-Munsif, then, prior to the last quarter of the 19th century when the great cultural changes began, was focused on four major themes:

1. *Devotion to the Land.* Agriculture was the economic base of the community, the occupation of all its members except for a few specialists who also were often part-time farmers.

2. *Religious orientation.* Religious attitudes permeated all aspects of life; religious behavior was integrated with economic and family behavior. The religious affiliation of the village was sharply defined.

3. *Predominance of kinship statuses* in the patterning and regulation of interpersonal affairs, for example in mutual aid arrangements. The kinship group was a focus of intense loyalty for its members, so much so that members of the same lineage were often preferred in marriage.

4. *Extreme localism* of knowledge, interests, and loyalties. This was reflected in the prevalence of inter-village feuds and in the clear preference for the marriage of an individual to a member of his or her own village rather than to an outsider. (Village endogamy.)

In the case of al-Munsif, there were a few variations on this normal structure. On the economic side, first, a certain amount of fishing has always been done right from the village itself. Second, the necessity of importing wheat has always made some money income imperative. It was therefore common for village men to do wage labor in other communities in slack seasons. Sponge diving was one such seasonal occupation, profitable but hazardous.

[1] [illegible], "Group Behavior in the Village Community of Lebanon," *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 48 (1942), pp. 231–39; "The Arab Village Community of the Middle East," *Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution 1943* (1944), pp. 520–43.